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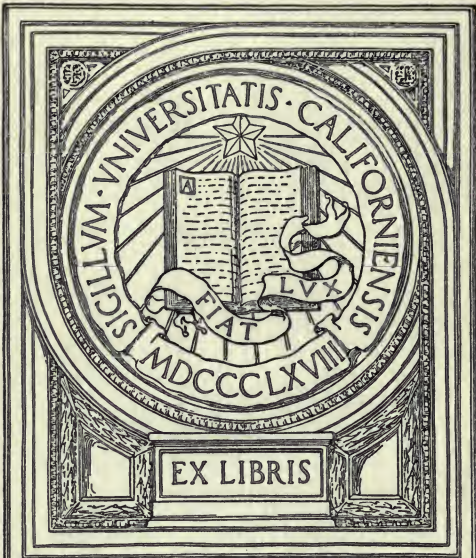
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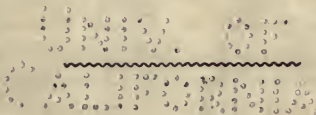
THE IRISH AMBASSADOR.

A Comedy

IN TWO ACTS.

BY JAMES KENNEY.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS,
COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, ETC.



NEW YORK:

WM. TAYLOR & CO.

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THE AMERICAN

WEEKLY

FOR THE YEAR 1880

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EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

The "IRISH AMBASSADOR" was introduced to the American Public by the late Tyrone Power, and the comedy returns the compliment wherever and whenever it is brought before us, by calling up the jovial image, and renewing the pleasant memory of that happiest of Irish performers. The first personator of *Sir Patrick O'Plenipo* stands apart in the recollection of all modern frequenters of the Theatre, a cabinet picture by itself, neatly framed, in glowing color, and so like life that we all remember him as a personal friend, with whom we have passed many happy hours. We do not seem to have known him on the stage, with make-believe scenery and the glare of the foot-lights, but as the cheerfullest of boon companions, with whom it was our good fortune to have been intimately acquainted, and to have passed many of the most delightful evenings of our lives. Other men *act* the Irishman, Power *was* the Irishman: whether gentle or simple, (as an admirable critic in a contemporary magazine described him,) the attorney or the tailor, the country gentleman or the rustic, the valet or the ambassador, he was the finest, the most natural, the most attractive actor of his time. He gave perpetual freshness to a range of parts liable to a monotonous treatment. Without much reference to the wit or poverty of his author, he flooded the scene with the abundant sunshine of his own ample humor, and the poorest subordinates who played with him brightened, like the happy insects of summer, in his enlivening glow. He has had many successors, and (it is but justice to him and them) to say he has had no equal. Among those to whom have fallen different corners of his mantle, we may mention, as among those who have inherited the most considerable shares—one of the cleverest of modern playwrights and rattling performers, Mr. John Brougham; Mr.

Hudson, with a genial warmth of performance akin to Power's felicity of temperament; Mr. Collins, with his telling delivery of the songs, and, broad and rude, but constantly refining, Mr. Barney Williams.

The "Irish Ambassador" is, and will long continue to be, as a wine-cask from the savor of excellent vintage it has once held, an acceptable piece, from the recollection of the popular performer by whom it was ushered before the world.

C. M.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	<i>Philadelphia.</i>	<i>Park, 1845.</i>	<i>Broadway, 1850.</i>
<i>Sir Patrick O'Plenipo</i>	Mr. T. Power.	Mr. Brougham.	Mr. Collins.
<i>Grand Duke</i>	" Walstein.	" Fredericks.	" Fredericks.
<i>Rodolph</i>	" Murdoch.	" Dyott.	" E. Shaw.
<i>Count Morenos</i>	" Rowbotham.	" H. Placide.	" Whiting.
<i>Baron Lowencraft</i>	" Watson.	" Fisher.	" Thompson.
<i>Olmütz</i>	" Kent.	" Povey.	" Hind.
<i>Herman</i>	" Crutar.	" Jones.	" Byrne
<i>Officer</i>	" Gallott.	" King.	" Naish.
<i>Attendants</i>			
<i>Lady Emily</i>	Mrs. Maywood.	Miss Kate Horn.	Mrs. Knight.
<i>Isabella</i>	" Rowbotham.	Mrs. Abbott.	Miss Kate Horn.

COSTUMES.

- SIR PATRICK.**—*First dress:* Undress uniform. *Second dress:* Full dress aide-de-camp; scarlet coat, black pantaloons with gold or silver lace.
- GRAND DUKE.**—*First dress:* Green coat, white breeches, military boots. *Second dress:* The same, with star, stockings and shoes.
- RODOLPH.**—*First dress:* Undress frock coat, breeches, and high boots. *Second dress:* Full Austrian uniform.
- COUNT MORENOS.**—Handsome court suit.
- BARON LOWENCRAFT.**—The same.
- HERMAN.**—Plain court suit.
- OFFICER.**—Handsome uniform.
- HUNTSMEN.**—Green frock coats, and high boots.
- LADY EMILY.**—*First dress:* Handsome morning dress. *Second dress:* Rich ball dress.
- ISABELLA.**—Rich travelling pelisse. *Second dress:* Handsome ball dress.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*;
 S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*;
 L. C. *Left of Centre*.

THE IRISH AMBASSADOR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An elegant apartment.*

Enter LADY EMILY *and* PRINCE RODOLPH.

Lady E. Begone, dear Rodolph, I entreat—the sun is high and all the world will be stirring.

Rodolph. So soon, Emily? This impatience looks unkind.

Lady E. Think what you are exposed to. You will be missed at the castle, and should any one meet your highness at such an hour— [*Casting her eyes down.*]

Rodolph. Your respect is admirable. But set your fears at rest. My *highness* has little to apprehend, methinks: though the house is yours, an affair of gallantry with my wife, my Princess, will not ultimately dishonor either my highness or yours.

Lady E. Ultimately! But who knows we are married, at present—and if we betray it prematurely, what may be the consequence? A Grand Duke, a great German potentate like your uncle, is not to be trifled with. Are you not the heir apparent to his sovereignty? And though you may plead that his own son was alive when you married me, and that for five long years you were positively dying for me, excellent reasons as they were with me, they will have very little weight with him. I fear we shall be discovered, Rodolph, and I, no doubt, shall be sent back to my native country, covered with shame and disgrace.

Rodolph. [*With energy.*] Never!

Lady E. Oh! yes, you'll be very heroic, I dare say;

but what will that do against reasons of state policy—the sovereign dignity?

Rodolph. They may all be reconciled.

Lady E. Ah! you have no reason to hope so; though I have perhaps. [Significantly.]

Rodolph. [Eagerly.] You have—is it possible? What are they? Fear not my delay; the Duke was abroad by day-break on a hunting party, and I may join him at my leisure; explain, I entreat.

Lady E. Well, then, listen patiently. When you came to England for instruction, and thought proper to make me a party in your researches, I was, as you know, under the protection of our excellent princess. She alone was privy to our marriage. In our correspondence since, she evinced the greatest anxiety for its prosperous issue, and has at last taken a most decided and active part in our favor.

Rodolph. Then there is hope indeed; and how will she proceed?

Lady E. In her last letter she informs me that, without losing a moment, a gentleman will arrive here from the British Court—a gentleman of the greatest address and discretion—who, without any apparent mission, will have it in charge to insinuate with the Duke the matter of our marriage, and by every possible means to endeavor to accomplish our reconciliation.

Rodolph. Generous Princess! To be honest with you, Emily, this was my last hope, and comes most seasonably. Ah! if you knew all my perplexities!

Lady E. And why don't I know them, sir. Let me tell you, Rodolph, I'm not at all pleased with you. I'm not jealous—you know I am not; but that portrait, sir, that you huddled up yesterday when I entered—

Rodolph. What, you observed it then?

Lady E. I did, indeed, sir.

Rodolph. I dreaded speaking to you upon the subject.

Lady E. So did I—I promise you.

Rodolph. After all, what is it?

Lady E. Ay, after ALL, what is it? Exactly my question; answer, if you please.

Rodolph. Well, then, my dear Emily, in a few words—that portrait—that portrait is—

Lady E. Well, sir.

Rodolph. Is one of two—

Lady E. What, one of two—

Rodolph. Hush! Some one is coming.

Lady E. Provoking!

Enter HERMAN.

Well, Herman, what do you want?

Herman. [*Giving letter.*] A letter, madam. The Baron waits.

Lady E. There, read it yourself, I beg.

Rodolph. [*Opens and reads.*] “An old friend, just arrived from England, entreats Lady Delawney’s permission to pay his respects to her. He brings news from some of her best friends in London; but does not venture to visit her in this country, till he is apprised that it is agreeable to her ladyship to receive him.

Signed, PATRICK O’PLENIPO.”

Lady E. Sir Patrick O’Plenipo! He was in the suite of the Princess; doubtless the very man we are expecting.

Rodolph. At such a moment! It can be no other! This precaution—

Lady E. This manner of expressing himself—

Rodolph. Every circumstance confirms it.

Lady E. [*To Herman, anxiously.*]—My compliments to the gentleman. He may come this morning—*immediately*—as soon as he possibly can make it convenient.

[*Herman going.*]

Rodolph. Herman, a moment. [*To Lady Emily.*] He shall attend me through the park; accompanied by him I shall awaken less suspicion.

Lady E. And the portraits, sir?

Rodolph. When we meet again.

Lady E. That won’t do, sir; I insist that you put them in my possession; let me see them; I’ll engage to unriddle them.

Rodolph. Within an hour you shall receive them.

Lady E. Enough! Now I’m satisfied.

Rodolph. [*Concluding the letter.*] “Apprise Sir Patrick of your wishes, and let his agency fulfill them.” With such a character from the Princess, we must confide in him without reserve. Adieu.

Lady E. Adieu !

[*Rodolph* about to exit—*Herman* stops him.]

Herman. Your highness cannot pass this way.

Rodolph. Why ?

Herman. There is company in the drawing-room.

Lady E. And who are they ?

Herman. The Count Morenos and his daughter, Donna Isabella.

Rodolph. The Spanish Envoy !

Lady E. Ah ! when did he arrive ?

Herman. Last night, madam.

Rodolph. You know him, then.

Lady E. Perfectly ; at Paris we became intimately acquainted. Take care *he* doesn't remember you ; for he is so thoroughly diplomatic—so full of scrutiny and finesse—not a word or look can escape his observation. A smile, a sigh, a gesture, a glance of the eye, or a ruffle of the eyebrow, might betray our secret to him at once.

Rodolph. Nay, I only fear your discovering *his* secret ! But he waits for you ; adieu, my only beloved.

Lady E. Till this evening.

Rodolph. Sooner, if possible.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*An elegant saloon, with two portraits, male and female—Folding doors open, showing a garden.*

Enter COUNT MORENOS *and* ISABELLA.

Count. Now, Isabella, be wary, be cautious ; don't commit me ; don't on any occasion betray the motive of our journey.

Isabella. Why how should I, papa, when I don't know myself ?

Count. That's nothing ; a penetrating politician will discover it at second hand.

Isabella. Will he ? Then I'll look very grave and steady.

Count. That won't do ; he'll know it's assumed.

Isabella. Then I'll laugh, papa ; I'll do nothing but laugh—ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

Count. No, no, no ! That's a broader mask than the other—that will never do.

Isabella. Bless me !—then what will do, papa ?

Count. Let me consider.

Isabella. Consider!—La! what about? Didn't my grandmamma teach me that honesty was the best policy—and will you go and teach my grandmamma, papa?

Count. Profanation! Do you compare an old woman to a minister of state?

Isabella. Yes, I do, papa; and, for all I know, it's a very apt comparison.

Count. Go, go—you are a simpleton.

Isabella. It may be so; but I'm quite sure—present company always excepted—a great minister may be too cunning by half; and if ever a new-fashioned one should start, downright honest and straight forward, he'd beat all the old *conundrums* put together.

Count. Silence: I hear the Lady Emily coming. Once more I say, don't commit me.

Enter LADY EMILY.

Lady E. Count Morenos, and my charming Isabella! What an agreeable surprise to meet you again in this country!

Count. A journey of pleasure, madam! Purely a journey of pleasure, to show my daughter the country; and I was determined to pay you our first visit, for we are just arrived—

Isabella. [*Surprised.*] Papa!

Count. [*Frowns at her.*] Just alighted from our carriage, and I protest that the journey has agreed with me surprisingly.

Isabella. Don't say so, papa—I declare you were as restless as if you had been in a high fever; always talking about Lowencraft, the Saxon Envoy; always asking questions about him, and calculating whether he had arrived before you—and what could it signify?

Count. Nothing—nothing at all, child—mere idle curiosity. What *should* it be, eh! madam?

Isabella. La! papa, Lady Emily is thinking of matters of much more importance. Now, do tell Lady Emily what *is* going forward. We are going to make a stir—I'm sure we are—for papa whispered to me to carry all my best ball dresses with me,

Count. I whispered you, child?

Isabella. Yes, you did, papa—and he has given me pearls and diamonds, and a magnificent full dress mantle, made exactly on the model of those worn by the maids of honor at the Queen's marriage.

Count. [*Aside.*] The devil!

Isabella. And I shouldn't at all wonder if something of the same sort—

Count. Isabella!

Isabella. Well, papa, don't vex yourself; only let them open the ball—only let me hear the music, and begin the gallopade—and when my feet are once in motion, my tongue shall be as quiet—I'll not utter a syllable, either of dresses, or mantles, or the Saxon ambassador, or—or—apropos, my dear Lady Emily. [*Talks to her apart.*]

Count. [*Aside.*] Never let an ambassador travel with a loquacious daughter; the murder's out—so I may as well confess, and make the best of it.

Lady E. What is all this, Count? Make mysteries with me?

Count. By no means, madam; I am only vexed my daughter's giddiness robs me of the credit of treating you with that prompt and ample confidence I intended. In brief, then, madam, the affair that brings me hither is no less than a marriage between Prince Rodolph and the Princess of our illustrious house!

Lady E. Impossible!

Isabella. Don't say so; don't wake me from the delightful dream! And why not tell me, papa? What need of secrecy—the bells will ring, the trumpets will blow?

Count. And your tongue will drown them all, I warrant. But I tell you no, child—there are obstacles.

Lady E. Obstacles?

Count. Formidable ones!

Lady E. [*Aside.*] I breathe again.

Count. I have discovered, from my own peculiar sources of information, that Saxony has the same instructions.

Lady E. [*Aside.*] Another rival!

Isabella. Only think of Saxony!

Count. Baron Lowencraft is expected every moment—a subtle competitor, madam—our reputation is critically at stake. If we may canvass your support—if we can but recruit such wit and beauty in our cause?

Lady E. Oh, sir, you overrate me sadly ; but as far as I am concerned, depend upon it, your rival shall have no advantage over you.

Count. That's generous, madam. I have also to request as an additional favor, madam, that during my stay here, you will allow my daughter to remain with you.

Lady E. Willingly.

[*Takes Isabella's hand.*

Isabella. That's because he's afraid of me.

Count. May be so ; I have cause enough, be assured—not on her own account, but on the score of a certain gentleman she knows of, that, go where we will, we are sure to find upon our road.

Isabella. What of that, papa ? It's quite by accident, I'm certain.

Count. I don't believe it. A giddy, crazy-pated Irishman, madam, that will never suit me for a son-in-law.

Isabella. And why not ?

Count. And why not ! Hasn't he thrown away the most glorious opportunities ?—isn't he the son of a great diplomatist ?—hasn't he been attached to two great embassies ?—and when he was at Madrid with his father didn't I give him lessons myself ?—but all to no purpose ; he'll never make a statesman, never !

Isabella. So much the better, papa ; if he did, I should hate him. Oh, who would be the wife of an ambassador, to be every day consulting one's lord what look one is to put on for the day ; never daring to utter a syllable, but running all the world over with one's mouth shut, just like a Columbine in a Pantomime ? Shocking ! I could not endure it, and so I told him.

Count. You did ?

Isabella. I did.

Count. Why, then, you shall never have him, I am determined ; and in confiding my daughter to you, madam, I trust I may bid defiance to Sir Patrick O'Plenipo.

Lady E. Sir Patrick O'Plenipo ?

Isabella. Sir Patrick O'Plenipo.

Lady E. Is he the gentleman you fear ?

Count. The gentleman I have reason to fear, madam.

Enter HERMAN.

Herman. Sir Patrick O'Plenipo!

Isabella. Oh, delightful!

Count. There—how comes he here again?

Lady E. Really, Count, it is impossible for one to say.

[*Aside.*] He'll discover all, but I can't dismiss him.
Show him in. [*Exit Herman.*]

Count. I told you, madam, he follows us everywhere. Surely he could have no other design—yet I could almost suspect—

Lady E. Pshaw! what should you suspect, sir?

Isabella. I suspect he's a very clever fellow!

[*Retires up.*]

Lady E. [*Aside.*] And so do I.

[*Comes down.*]

Count. [*Aside.*] I'll have an eye upon him. [*Retires up.*]

Enter SIR PATRICK.

Sir P. Where is she? Ah, my dear Lady Emily; lucky man I am to behold you once again, when so many of your admirers at home are breaking their hearts for you.

Lady E. Your usual gallantry, Sir Patrick!

Sir P. By my honor, madam, since your ladyship left us, we have petitioned for an export tax upon beauty, and that, in our next treaties, the British be made contraband all over the world.

Count. Bravo!

Isabella. Bravo! [*Isabella and Count come down.*]

Sir P. Is it possible? Do I see the beautiful Donna Isabella? I am overwhelmed with joy and confusion.

Count. And if you are overwhelmed with confusion, Sir Patrick, it isn't the first time, I'll answer for you.

Sir P. And is it there you are? There spoke the dandiest of diplomatists—and there you are again with your long head, your piercing eye, and penetrating nose, that can rummage out the contents of our simple craniums as if they were roasted potatoes.

Count. Why, the contents of some craniums—

Sir P. Don't be personal; to be sure I was an infant in your hands, and yet, most sagacious Don Cavalier, I'll

bet you a hogshead of Seville oranges you can't guess the nature of my important mission, at this moment.

Count. You intrusted with an important mission?

Sir P. Faith, I am, and it's a very grave negotiation.

Lady E. [*Aside.*] Imprudent!

Sir P. Ah! you're surprised now; you think me a blundering blockhead—hardly to be trusted with an ambassador's pack-saddle—but let me tell you, Count, they have a different opinion of me at the Court of St. James. I am employed, ladies, and here I am come to astonish the Germans with my own natural born diplomacy.

Count. You will astonish them, I dare say?

Sir P. You may say that, I *will* astonish them.

Isabella. Is this possible, Sir Patrick? You, ambassador—you?

Sir P. You may say that, my beauty!

Count. With secret instructions?

Sir P. With secret instructions—and, as you probably may be able to assist me in the business, I'll explain my secret instructions to the whole company.

Lady E. [*Alarmed.*] Sir Patrick!

Sir P. Madam? We'll be colleagues and coadjutors.

Lady E. But your mission, sir, may be at variance.

Sir P. Then, madam, we'll be colleagues and coadjutors against each other, and an explanation is the more necessary.

Count. Certainly—certainly!

[*Nods and smiles at Lady Emily.*]

Sir P. You see what an innocent I am—but you have the fascination of the rattlesnake, and your prey drops into your mouth. Learn, then, that in a month from this time, the gay old Duchess of Dazzlecourt marries her darling little daughter—and pretty work there will be among the tailors, milliners, and mantua-makers. Grosvenor Square ladies will be astonished with a fête and fancy ball, combining the costumes of every nation within the reach of an ambassador—not from the vague licentious wardrobes of the opera and the play-houses, but from the original and authentic sources: and finding your humble servant inclined for a short excursion to foreign parts—"To you, Sir Pat," said

the Duchess, (she always calls me Sir Pat, in her good humor,) "to your known taste and experience I confide this important mission"—and here I am, with full powers to treat with civil and military, soldiers and sailors, countesses, and all others. I am carefully to investigate all their habiliments from top to toe—that is, all who have any claim to rank with the picturesque and beautiful; and upon consideration, Count, that will not interfere with you at all, at all!

Lady E. Admirable!

Count. [*Aside.*] An artful story.

Isabella. Upon my word, Sir Patrick, how you do go on.

Sir P. By my soul, I do go on—I have gone on—and will go on. Barring a slight accident on the road, a most auspicious journey I have made of it.

Lady E. An accident!

Sir P. Oh, a trifle! Travelling, as on such an occasion I ought, like the wind, and like a pretty smart gale of wind, I happened to come in contact with a most formidable sort of a German equipage; a landau they call it; a bronze upon wheels, madam: a fine, substantial specimen of gothic architecture: and taking the south wall at right angles, down comes the whole magnificent edifice, and presently out pops its respectable tenant from the ruins, inquiring what the devil I was about. About a delicate affair, said I—begging your pardon; your tenement blocked up the high road, and an ambassador is bound to lose no time, and so I put it out of the way, and now I'll go on my way, and away I went—which I I am sure your honor will think a most satisfactory apology.

Count. [*Significantly.*] Oh, certainly! And so you travel over seas, upset landaus, and run along the road like a gale of wind, to verify costumes for a fancy ball?

Sir P. Don't disparage my commission, Count, 'tis a very delicate charge, as I told the gentleman looking out at the window, with an eye flashing fire, and the other eclipsed with his periwig; and I repeat it—to contemplate the drapery of a lovely creature in the abstract. forgetting all the rest of her beautiful identity, a man must have the clear head and metaphysical constitution of

an Irishman to undertake it. I appeal to my own Donna Isabella?

Isabella. You do? Why, then, I must say, of all the rigmarole stories—

Sir P. Och, for shame on you! [Retires up.]

Count. [Aside to Lady Emily.] You can't believe all this?

Lady E. Not literally, perhaps.

Sir P. [Comes down.] Now he's plotting with her ladyship.

Isabella. Why, don't you see he doubts your story?

Sir P. Doubts! why he'd doubt his own father!

Isabella. What, my grandpapa?

Sir P. Yes, and your grandmamma, and the whole generation with all my heart; I know the ways of his excellency, and yet I have told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Lady E. [Aside to the Count.] Now you see, so far, his real object is evident enough. [Looking at Isabella.]

Count. I'm not sure of that! [Looks significantly at Lady Emily, then approaches Sir Patrick.] You intend, Sir Patrick, to be presented to the Grand Duke, of course.

Sir P. Devil a bit! Here is the potentate I negotiate with, and if we could only get the proper signature to a certain treaty of alliance,—[The Count appears in thought.]—defensive and offensive?

Lady E. Patience, Sir Patrick; you know the terms on which the lady is to be obtained, and I trust you will soon prove your claim to her; but that is a matter you and I must discuss between ourselves, that is if you dare trust yourself to a tête-à-tête with me.

Sir P. Madam, a Plenipotentiary is prepared for anything.

Lady E. Enough—you shall have due notice. Come, Isabella, I must show you to your apartment, and for a while will leave the politicians to entertain each other.

[Exit with Isabella.]

Count. [Aside.] His character may have changed; I suspect him and must put him to the proof at once. [Turning towards him with assumed frankness and affability.] Well, Sir Patrick, here you are.

Sir P. And here you are, and here we both are!

Count. The same open, sprightly, agreeable young fellow you used to be.

Sir P. [*Bowing.*] Oh, blarney—oh, nonsense!

Count. 'Tis the truth, as all who know you will witness; but as to your story of the fancy ball?

Sir P. Faith, that is the truth also.

Count. If you hold me unworthy of your confidence on this occasion, I must tell you frankly, any hopes you may have entertained as to Isabella are categorically at an end.

Sir P. Don't tantalize me, Count; didn't you break off the treaty? Now you are beginning with a fresh ultimatum.

Count. Sir, my objections have no such reference; I must have a son-in-law who can unite with me in the course I have so successfully chosen. Ay, sir, and one competent to distinguish himself.

Sir P. And haven't I had the best intentions in life?—and if I have again taken up the sword, isn't that the real arbiter elegantiarum of all your politicians? Commend me to a negotiation by beat of drum—I'll engage to conduct an epistolary one with any statesman in Europe.

Count. No, sir; to trim the political balance with a nice hand, and secure tranquillity by address and diplomatic dexterity, that is the glorious aim of my ambition?

Sir P. And wasn't that the glorious aim of my ambition?—and didn't I try myself to oblige you, Count?—but my taste for Burgundy and good-fellowship was the ruin of my hopes—in “vino veritas,” and come to the wrong truth instead of the right—or right instead of the wrong; and when I should have been trimming the political balance, by the power, I have lost my own!

Count. And yet, Sir Patrick, you may be on the road to reformation—I have a shrewd notion you *are*—and if you only thought proper to confide to me the true nature of your present business here?

Sir P. And haven't I confided it to the whole company?

Count. Nonsense!

Sir P. Haven't I confided it to the landladies and

chambermaids, and picked up the choicest collection of bibs and tuckers?

Enter OLMUTZ.

Count. Recollect, sir, who you are talking to.

[*Olmutz comes down; makes a grave and proud salute; appears mysterious—Sir Patrick observes him.*

Sir P. Perhaps I interrupt business?

Olmutz. Could I speak a word in private with the Count Morenos?

Sir P. By all means; consider me, as every body else does, an absent gentleman. [*Observing an old picture.*] Ha! a dignified old dowager, a noble specimen for the Duchess. [*Takes out tablets and sketches.*] Never mind me, fire away! [*Sits and sketches, up stage.*

Olmutz. [*Approaches Count.*] I this moment called at your hotel, and was desired to follow you here.

Count. Well, what news? Shall I have an audience with the Prince?

Olmutz. I have done what was in my power, but am sorry to say the Prince cannot receive you this morning.

Count. That's unfortunate: a very heavy disappointment; have you any idea of his reason?

Olmutz. None.

Count. Is the Saxon Envoy arrived?

Olmutz. He is not, your excellency.

Count. That's favorable; and can I take no advantage of it?—no means of seeing the Prince?—does he receive nobody?

Olmutz. Nobody, except a stranger, whom I have no knowledge of, and who, it seems, is just arrived from London—one Sir Patrick O'Plenipo.

—*Sir P.* I've got it; I think she squints. [*Sketching.*

Count. Hush! not so loud; are you sure of what you say?

Olmutz. Positive; I have a letter for him—a letter from the Prince.

Count. A letter from the Prince?

Olmutz. Who charged me to deliver it with all possible secrecy, and I am now on my way to his hotel.

Count. You may spare yourself the trouble—there he is.

Olmutz. That the gentleman? If he's your excellency's

friend, your business is settled; he's in the greatest favor with the Prince. I have no doubt he can do anything with him.

Count. I'm thunderstruck! Fulfil your errand, and leave us.

Sir P. Now, whether that be a gown or a petticoat, devil burn me, if I can tell! *Count,* is that a gown or a petticoat?

Olmutz. [*Nods to Count, and cries "Hem!"—approaches Sir Patrick.*] I believe I have the honor of addressing Sir Patrick O'Plenipo?

Sir P. At your service, sir.

Olmutz. Here is a letter which his highness, the Prince, charged me to deliver you with all possible secrecy.

[*Offers letter.*]

Sir P. Isn't it a blunder you're making?

Olmutz. Read the address.

Sir P. [*Takes it.*] 'Tis myself, indeed.

Olmutz. And I hope you will bear witness to his highness that I've fulfilled his intentions.

[*Exit, with much parade.*]

Sir P. Good-day—good-by! He is as mysterious as a hieroglyphic; and as to his highness, *Count,* I know no more of him than his great grandmother.

Count. Indeed! then you must regard his letter as a prodigious condescension.

Sir P. Faith I do; and as I perceive you are onerous on the subject, may be you'd like to open it?

Count. You anticipate the contents.

Sir P. An invitation to dinner, no doubt; he has found out our tastes are congenial.

Count. What, dine with him on the day of arrival: 'tis without precedent!

Sir P. Is it? Then I'll originate it; and I'll engage there'll be plenty of precedents afterwards. Do me the favor, *Count,* to satisfy your curiosity, while I take a finishing touch at my old woman.

[*Sketching.*]

Count. Oh, since you insist upon it. [*Opens the letter and reads.*] "I cannot receive Sir Patrick at my own apartments."

Sir P. And who the devil asked him?

Count. [*Reading.*] "But I beg of him to meet me in the

park at one o'clock, when I will escape the hunting party, for the purpose of obtaining a few moments' conversation on a subject he is well aware of. In the mean time, I shall rely on his discretion."

Sir P. None of your fun: finish it—fire away.

Count. "RODOLPH!" I have finished.

Sir P. You have read it all?

Count. Every syllable.

Sir P. And would you have the complaisance to explain the meaning?

Count. The meaning is evident: the Prince has refused an audience to everybody—even to me, on earnest solicitation—yet, forsooth, he is to meet you in private, and alludes to the purpose; on which, it appears, there is already an understanding between you.

Sir P. He has it all to himself, then.

Count. And you insist you came here—

Sir P. In search of the picturesque.

Count. In search of a fiddlestick!

Sir P. Why not, if it's national and characteristic?

Count. Sir Patrick, this is passing the bounds of decorum and respect; but since you defy me, sir—since you can thus trifle with an old friend—I tell you, young sir, that I can prevent this interview.

Sir P. Oh! but you wouldn't have the malice.

Count. 'Tis my duty, sir; this secret tampering with the Grand Duke's nephew is extremely irregular: out of all precedent—your inexperience only can excuse it.

Sir P. Keep your temper, Count. [*Aside.*] As usual, I'm playing the very devil here, without knowing it.

Count. And see, sir; the affair presses, it seems—here comes the Prince in search of you.

Enter RODOLPH, in haste.

Rodolph. 'Tis he—'tis Sir Patrick!—The Spanish Envoy still here!

Count. To meet your highness here is an unexpected good fortune.

Rodolph. The good fortune is on my part, my lord. Eh! surely isn't it Sir Patrick O'Plenipo?

Sir P. And your highness' very humble servant.

Count. Your highness knows Sir Patrick?

Rodolph. Intimately!

Sir P. [*Aside.*] The devil he does!

Rodolph. We were acquainted in London; and I hope while he stays here he will consider me as an old friend.

Sir P. Oh, you do me amazing honor. [*Aside.*] Amazing it is: the first time I ever saw him!

Count. [*Aside.*] Didn't know him from his great grandfather! This morning I entreated, through Mr. Olmutz, your secretary—that is, officially, and according to established forms—a moment's audience!

Rodolph. My lord, 'twas unnecessary: to you, I am always visible; come to-morrow—the next day—when-ever you please—and then we'll speak of business. This day we devote to pleasure: to-night we shall have a ball and concert: we shall see *you*, I hope, and Sir Patrick, too. [*To Sir Patrick.*] I think I recollect you are a great musician, a distinguished violincello?

Sir P. 'Tis possible; I never tried!

Rodolph. [*Aside to Sir Patrick.*] Try to get rid of him.

Sir P. His excellency?

Rodolph. [*Nods, then aside.*] Handsomely!

Sir P. Oh! to be sure. [*To Count.*] His highness respectfully requests you'll do us the favor to get out.

Count. Walk out!

Sir P. That is to say, in official language, retire—withdraw—get out of this genteely and quietly—put yourself on the other side of the door for five minutes!

Count. Sir: the solution of this conduct, on both sides, is by no means difficult; but your triumph, be assured, is of short duration. [*Aside.*] The Grand Duke shall know of it instantly. [*Bows to Prince, and exits, angry.*]

Sir P. Away.

Rodolph. Ha! ha! Your proceedings, sir, are summary, indeed; and now to business. You come immediately from London?

Sir P. Immediately.

Rodolph. And you have communicated to Lady Emily the instructions you are charged with?

Sir P. Every syllable of the matter.

Rodolph. I may commence, then, without reserve. In the first place, here are two portraits. [*Giving them.*]

Sir P. The two portraits I see: Spanish and German;

the German has red hair—your fancy, I suppose—it is of no consequence: that is a matter of taste. Two beauties they are!

Rodolph. I resign them entirely; and let me entreat you to deliver them immediately—into whose hands I need not tell you.

Sir P. I beg your highness' pardon.

Rodolph. Enough! Time presses; the presence of Morenos sufficiently explains my situation, and I rely with confidence on your own address and discernment. [*Distant horns.*] I hear the hunters. [*Turns aside.*]

Sir P. What the devil is all this about? I can't understand a word of it. [*Horns out.*] 'Tis clear we are bothered alike.

Rodolph. [*Returning.*] One thing I had forgot.

Sir P. Yes! [*Aside.*] Now I'll perceive it.

Rodolph. And it is certainly favorable to us.

Sir P. That's lucky!

Rodolph. From what providential occurrence I cannot guess, the Saxon Envoy is not yet arrived: a circumstance that affords us time and opportunity.

Sir P. True: and if it would only afford us a bit of a clue—you understand?

Rodolph. No, I don't.

Sir P. Oh! we are bothered alike.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isabella. Oh! my dear Sir Patrick, such a bustle!—don't you hear it?

Sir P. I do.

Isabella. Horsemen, and dogs, and lancers, and the Grand Duke himself, all returning from the chase, and coming to refresh themselves at Lady Emily's.

Rodolph. We are ruined!

Sir P. Old Don Morenos has certainly informed against us.

Rodolph. Impossible! Did you then disclose the object of our meeting?

Sir P. Not a word of it, upon my honor.

Rodolph. Then we are safe. Your resources are well known to us, and you will easily disguise from the Grand Duke the object of our meeting.

Sir P. Make yourself easy; if the Grand Duke discovers that from me he'll be wiser than I am. [*Horns.*] Here is his highness.

Enter GRAND DUKE, leading LADY EMILY; the COUNT MORENOS, BARON LOWENCRAFT, HUNTSMEN and ATTENDANTS.

Duke. This impromptu sort of visit, Lady Emily, is, I fear, rating your complaisance a little too freely; but the Count Morenos praised your park and gardens so warmly, I really could not resist its allurements.

Lady E. Your highness honors and obliges me.

Duke. They have had their attractions for my nephew, too, it seems; and our meeting here is in good time. Rodolph, let me present to you Baron Lowencraft, the Envoy from Saxony, who is this instant arrived, and was impatient to pay his respects to you.

Baron. To be frank with your highness, I had hoped and intended to enjoy this honor much earlier, but an unlucky accident happened to my carriage, and compelled me to a delay, which may have occasioned some surprise.

Sir P. This is the little man I tumbled into the mud.

Rodolph. And how did it happen, sir?

Baron. To be candid with your highness, I haven't the least idea. The road was excellent: and to tell you the honest truth, I suspect it was done intentionally: a crazy, unceremonious sort of a gentleman, in a little stout English cabriolet, and speaking in a wild, outlandish accent, with a grave smirk upon his face, which I shall not easily forget. [*Noticing Sir Patrick, who appears much amused.*] Eh! why surely here he is! here is the very gentleman!

Sir P. Is it there you are? Sir, I have to beg ten thousand pardons, and I should have staid to assist you, as in duty bound, but as I observed I had done you no serious mischief, and having a business on hand that admitted of no delay—

Lady E. and Rodolph. Sir Patrick!

Count. [*Aside.*] I guessed as much.

Baron. Enough! 'twas an accident.

Sir P. 'Pon my honor, only an accident.

Baron. 'Twas an accident, and there's an end of it. From the Court of London, I presume?

Sir P. From the court-end, if you please.

Rodolph. [*Aside to him.*] Excellent!

Lady E. [*Aside.*] Intrepid creature!

Count. [*Aside.*] A bold step, indeed; catching a grace beyond the reach of art. [*To Grand Duke.*] I trust your highness is satisfied?

Duke. [*Nods to him, and addresses Sir Patrick.*] Excuse me, sir; but pray, how does it happen that a British Envoy should be in my presence without having introduced himself?

Sir P. Please your highness, my presence at court has always been most unfortunate, and my business on this occasion entitled me to no such honor—as the Count Morenos can answer for me.

Count. Certainly. Oh! dear me, he merely comes about the decorations of a fancy ball!

Duke. A fancy ball!

Sir P. Nothing else in life.

Count. To settle the trimmings of a doublet?

Sir P. Brocades and flounces, gores, gussetts, and shoulder straps.

Duke. A singular mission, truly!

Count. This assurance is incalculable!

Duke. [*Aside to Count.*] The truth must be detected. [*To Sir Patrick.*] We have a ball to-night, sir, and shall be happy to see you.

Sir P. Most proud of the honor, though it has already been done me by his highness the Prince.

Count. [*Aside to Grand Duke.*] You hear, sir.

Duke. So much the better. Come then, my friends, the day is still fresh, and we'll return to our sports.

[*Horns sounded; Exeunt all through centre, except Sir Patrick, who takes Isabella from under Count's arm, and exits.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A saloon in the Palace; Ball Room; Music of Quadrille.*

Enter COUNT MORENOS *and* ISABELLA.

Count. This way, my child.

Isabella. Oh! papa, don't detain me; such a beautiful ball: I can't bear to leave it; pray let me go back!

Count. I tell you no! I must consider.

Isabella. What a room for an English country dance; and how I long for a real, downright German waltz! Indeed, papa, I'm losing all my time.

Count. [*In reverie.*] This Sir Patrick is an unaccountable fellow; he has now ingratiated himself with the Grand Duke, as with the Prince. Have I been deceived in him? Is he become such a master of our art? His coolness surprises me; and what is still more difficult in our practice, he has a confounded hypocritical gayety of his own, that beats us all hollow. On our return home there was he amusing the Grand Duke with a parcel of Irish stories. He even made an extempore epigram on the Lord Chamberlain, which, *I* thought, must have settled his business. Quite the contrary: his highness laughed like a lunatic. [*Music.*]

Isabella. [*Looking out.*] Pa, pa, pa! the waltz is beginning.

Count. Patience, girl; the Prince isn't come.

Isabella. What of that? I am engaged the very first waltz.

Count. What, engaged yourself; and to whom?

Isabella. La! papa, you know to whom.

Count. You have done very wrong in a matter of such importance; you have acted rashly. To Sir Patrick, I suppose?

Isabella. To be sure, papa!

Count. The fellow's impudence is past bearing. I forbid you to dance with him.

Isabella. But I have promised him : I must declare off, then.

Count. Declare ! No—declare nothing !

Isabella. I may have a dance with him, then ?

Count. By no means—no ! My decision will depend on the production of a certain weighty document. I must find the chamberlain, for the purpose of learning how Sir Patrick has passed his time in the palace ; and whether you are not to dance with him, or whether you are, requires a deal of nice consideration.

[*Music—exit pompously.*]

Isabella. [*Looking out.*] There now ; and there's Sir Patrick looking out for me. Oh ! dear, he comes ! Now then to give him a thorough diplomatic reception. [*Music.*]

Enter SIR PATRICK.

Sir P. What, my little colleague, is this the way you serve me ? Are you giving me the slip ? Have you forgot your promise ?

Isabella. Promise ! What promise ?

Sir P. The promise to dance with me ; don't you remember ?

Isabella. By no means ; I acknowledge no engagement whatever ; there was nothing signed between us, and the ratification of the treaty depends upon the production of a certain weighty document.

Sir P. Upon what ?

Isabella. A document ! I must see the chamberlain to know how you have passed your time at the palace, and whether I am to dance with you, or whether I am not, depends upon a deal of nice consideration ! [*Retires up.*]

Sir P. A mighty accomplished petticoat politician ; but whether she's in for foreign affairs, or for my home department, or what may be the nature of the document in question, are points for a future Congress, and to me the most interesting of all my complicated transactions !

[*Turns about.*]

Re-enter COUNT.

Count. Where is the chamberlain ?

Sir P. How the devil do I know?

Count. You here, Sir Patrick! Which way did you enter?

Sir P. Which way? Why, from the dinner table, to be sure; the door is wide enough.

Count. The dinner table of whom?

Sir P. Of his highness, to be sure. Do you think I dine with lackeys?

Count. What, a public dinner?

Sir P. Public—public! What, and I there without you! No, sir; the Grand Duke knows his station better; pot-luck, sir, nothing in the world else. Riding home with the Grand Duke, and happening to venture a joke or two upon German cooking, he insisted upon curing me of my prejudices immediately.

Count. [*Distressingly.*] That was his object?

Sir P. And the pleasure of my company. He saw I didn't stand upon any ceremony, and a most pleasing little party we had; and then such interesting conversation—

Count. With the Prince?

Sir P. With the prince and the ladies: chiefly on the subject of my mission.

Count. [*Significantly.*] I understand!

Sir P. The picturesque and beautiful.

Count. [*Aside.*] Again!

Sir P. These matters, no doubt, are beneath you; but for the ladies, you know—

Count. Hark ye, Sir Patrick; I own I never gave you credit for half the address and ability you have displayed this day; but my prejudice is now at an end, and to convince you of it, confide to me frankly the true motives of your mission! do this, and my daughter is your's.

[*Isabella comes down.*]

Sir P. What, my dear little Donna?

Isabella. Impossible! Oh! Sir Patrick, what good news—what generosity—and you don't fall on your knees!

Sir P. Oh! yes, I was just about it; only you see—

Count. You hesitate.

Sir P. Hesitate! Not at all; only pause for a moment. Such an unexpected happiness, and on such unexpected

conditions, in my particular circumstances, you must feel, Count, that whether I can accept of it, or whether I cannot, requires a deal of nice consideration.

Isabella. [*Angrily.*] Consideration!

Count. Undoubtedly! [*To Sir Patrick.*] Think for a moment. [*Leads Isabella up the stage.*]

Sir P. Think! think! It is easy to say think, but what am I to think about? What will I do now? What information can I give him, unless it is a twentieth edition of the picturesque and the beautiful? All the secret I have is that I have no secret at all; but am as great a blockhead as ever; he has become so superannuated, he won't believe me: and if he did, out breaks the politician again, and he will despise me, and cheat me of my little Donna. Safe's the word, then; and since I'll get nothing in exchange, I will preserve my honor and swagger through it.

Count. [*Coming down.*] Well, Sir Patrick, the lady is impatient—are you decided?

Sir P. [*With affected dignity.*] I am, Count; but situated as I am—I may say circumstanced, you will forgive me—but placed as I am between love and duty, the struggle has been most critical—I may say most tremendous—but that good opinion with which I have inspired your excellency, and which fills me with a pride certainly unfelt before—the character, the merit, you are pleased to ascribe to me—all this and much more, I say, your excellency, all this I never will forfeit; private feeling must yield to public duty; and to preserve your esteem and my own, to my sensibilities, and feeling a reciprocity of sentiment that—damn the word more can I say on the subject. [*Turns up.*]

Isabella. I'm thunderstruck!

Count. [*Aside.*] He soars above us all! [*Aloud.*] Refuse my daughter—revolt against my friendship! But I will make a friend of him yet! I'll to the Secretary, and devise some covert attack! He'll be a great character!

[*Exit.*]

Isabella. He's an ungrateful blockhead.

Sir P. Don't be angry, my charmer: behold me at your feet.

Isabella. You may rise; it is to no purpose.

Sir P. Don't condemn me without a hearing.

Isabella. I have heard you, sir! What, when our happiness depends upon you, and you refused me!

Sir P. Upon my honor, then, in my place you would have done the same, and a great deal more. To you my heart is open: and now I'll just tell you why I didn't communicate the secret—but you'll not betray me?

Isabella. Oh, certainly not!

Sir P. Why, then, come here and look me in the face.

[*Pause.*] The devil a secret I have to communicate! Now, you'll not tell any one?

Isabella. For shame! trying your Jesuitical nonsense upon me, too—you that used to be honesty itself; but I foresaw it.

Sir P. I am as honest as ever I was, and nothing to boast of either. 'Tis your beauty that has caught the infection; and I have discovered that in a great political family, the only way of disguising the truth is to tell it. Here I am in the thick of some great discussion, like a blundering parenthesis, or a comma misplaced, making nothing but cross-readings and confusion; but don't, now, like a little despot as you are, insist upon my using my tongue in spite of my teeth—at all, at all!

Isabella. It's mighty well—but haven't you had a secret interview with the Prince? And what was it about?

Sir P. I'd be very glad to know that myself. His highness paid me a compliment or two upon my arrival, and immediately handed me a couple of portraits—very elegant.

Isabella. A couple of portraits!

Sir P. Here they are. [*Gives them.*] Look at them, and then you'll know as much of them as I do.

Isabella. Richly set in diamonds; and, as I live, one of them the Saxon Princess I met at Geneva, and the other the cousin of our king of Spain!

Sir P. There it is now; you see, my charmer, the secret is all on your side.

Isabella. And why were they given to you?

Sir P. May be you can tell me that also: for 'tis more than his highness could. Here are a couple of portraits, says he—are they, says I—let me entreat you, sir, said he,

to deliver them, into whose hands I needn't tell you—and he didn't; but you threw a light at once upon the whole business—they are presents to the two ambassadors.

Isabella. Well, I dare say.

Sir P. That I shouldn't have hit upon it before now—and faith, a very handsome compliment; your father, no doubt, will be flattered with it. Och! it will set us all right again. Take it, my charmer—take him the Spanish lady, and tell him 'tis myself that sent it, with the Prince's compliments.

Isabella. That I will; and you promise me this—that it is nothing but a little commission extempore, and that you never will be a great politician?

Sir P. I can refuse you nothing.

Isabella. I am satisfied; and when I come back, I will dance with you in spite of the whole Cabinet Council, or a Royal Proclamation! [Exit.

Sir P. Daylight comes at last; and, apropos, here comes the Saxon; for fear of blundering, hadn't I better wait my cue? It's that I'll do.

Enter BARON LOWENCRAFT.

Baron. [*Aside.*] Here he is; now to give him an opportunity. Good evening, Sir Patrick. [*Sir Patrick bows.*] Perhaps I may not come unseasonably? [*Bowing.*

Sir P. By no means.

[*A short pause,*

Baron. [*Aside.*] He's silent, a sign he has a great deal to say. [*Pause of mutual silence; inquiring looks; Baron motions to sit down. Sir Patrick assents, and they take seats; silence after being seated, till Baron becomes impatient.*] I fear your journey has fatigued you?

Sir P. Not at all; I hope you have recovered from your roll in the mud?

Baron. Perfectly. [*Pause again.*] I—a—ah—oh—

Sir P. You were speaking, sir.

Baron. I have just seen the Count Morenos.

Sir P. Have you though? I hope you found him in a good humor.

Baron. To say the truth, sir, by no means in a good humor with you; from which I judge that you and I might probably make some approaches.

Sir P. [*Draws nearer.*] By all means; I hope, sir, we shall be intimate—have some pleasant days together.

Baron. [*Aside.*] A good sign. Then, Sir Patrick, to be honest with you—

Sir P. If you please.

Baron. As to our own success, we are comparatively indifferent, but that the Spaniard should carry it—

Sir P. The Spaniard!

Baron. That would be humiliating to both of us; therefore, if we could only understand each other it would be a great advantage.

Sir P. On my side, certainly; I've understood nothing yet.

Baron. As we narrow the competition, in the first place, then, what is the Prince's opinion, and what is your's?—that is all I ask.

Sir P. Well, upon my honor, that's not much. Why, then, to be candid with you, it would be no easy matter for me to give an opinion on the subject; and with regard to the sentiments of the Prince, here is a little present which will no doubt explain them, and which I take it to be my business to present to your excellency.

[*Gives portrait.*]

Baron. What! the portrait of the Princess returned by you, from Prince Rodolph?

Sir P. From his highness himself, with his kind compliments.

Baron. This is decisive!

Sir P. It is all settled.

Baron. [*With emphasis.*] Sir, the indecorum of such conduct is as unbecoming your character, as that of the Prince!

Sir P. Oh! the devil pursues me still.

Baron. The Grand Duke, the whole court, shall know of what you have done.

[*Going.*]

Sir P. My lord, as you are going to tell the whole court, may be you'd be so good as to begin with me, if you please?

Baron. I'm made at once your dupe and laughing-stock; 'tis a national insult. Spain shall make common cause with Saxony, and the Court of St. James shall make us mutual satisfaction.

Sir P. Why, then, if you go to that, sir, the Court of St. James is not to be intimidated either by Spain or Saxony.

[*Both put on their hats together, and face each other—pausing.*

Baron. Sir, you have exceeded your credentials.

Sir P. You may say that, sir!

Baron. And you will find you have compromised both yourself and your country. [Exit.

Sir P. Good-by, sir—go to the devil, sir!—My old character will stick to me through thick and thin; and here is the third continental war I have been on the point of provoking, in my diplomatic situation. To the best of my discernment, I have brought my unfortunate friend, the Prince, into as great a scrape as myself, and stand by him I will—partly to behave like a gentleman, and partly because I begin to have a mighty longing to know the rights of the business.

Enter RODOLPH and LADY EMILY.

Rodolph. We are lost—undone! A measure so abrupt, so unwarranted—oh, is it possible? Are you here, sir—do you know the danger that surrounds us?

Sir P. 'Tis for that I remain, your highness.

Lady E. Such conduct, sir, is noble, and only what I expected; in you, I am sure we shall have a friend to the last.

Rodolph. A friend! when I was on the point of telling you that the storm, now ready to burst upon us, is of his raising, and that coming unaccredited, as he does, it will be well if he escapes a dungeon!

Sir P. Och, the powers!

Lady E. What has he done?

Rodolph. Without authority—without advice! You know our great hope was to gain time by temporising with the Envoys of Spain and Saxony?

Lady E. Certainly.

Rodolph. Would you believe it, he has dismissed them both, without the slightest ceremony!

Lady E. Is it possible?

Rodolph. Of course, they are furious.

Lady E. [*With firmness.*] Upon consideration, he was quite in the right.

Sir P. I was! blessings on your sex; the petticoats never desert me!

Lady E. 'Twas the only thing left for us; it must have happened sooner or later, and why stand shilly-shally?

Sir P. That's the politics after my own heart.

Lady E. How did he venture to make you a party in such a step?

Rodolph. 'Twas in spite of myself, and without ever apprising me. You know the portraits I promised to send you?

Sir P. [*Aside.*] To send her ladyship!

Lady E. They were of the rival Princesses?

Rodolph. They were; and he has returned them in my name, to their respective ambassadors.

Lady E. I understand perfectly.

Sir P. [*Aside.*] You're mighty lucky!

Lady E. Oh! sir, how greatly I am obliged to you.

Sir P. Indeed, you are not, madam; much less than your ladyship imagines.

Rodolph. 'Tis certain you have placed us in a strange dilemma. What is to be our conduct to the Grand Duke—is the truth to be disclosed at once?

Sir P. By all means, I vote for that; tell the truth—tell the truth!

Lady E. 'Tis a critical proceeding.

Sir P. No matter; an eclaircissement at all hazards; my first and last word is an eclaircissement.

Rodolph. Be it so, then; we must confess all, and throw ourselves upon his august clemency.

Sir P. Ay, upon his august clemency.

Rodolph. And since that is your advice, do you, my friend, take upon yourself—

Sir P. Me?

Lady E. Oh, yes, Sir Patrick, you must, indeed.

Sir P. I beg your pardon, but you see I have done a great deal in the business already.

Rodolph. You certainly have.

Lady E. And could you now desert us?

Sir P. Never!

Rodolph. To you falls, of course, the task—having gone so far, there can be no reason why you shouldn't proceed.

Sir P. There you are right—no reason on earth—and, if you insist on it, will you just give me a hint?

Rodolph & Lady E. Certainly, certainly!

[*They retire up, but attend to what is passing.*]

Enter ISABELLA.

Isabella. So, sir, I came to look for you; pretty business you have been about, you keep your promise finely!

Sir P. Is the ball begun? I'm ready.

Isabella. Yes, sir, but I am not!—Ball, indeed; pretty time to talk of that! I've just come from my father.

Sir P. Oh! I guess Saxony and he are fuming like a brace of bulls!

Isabella. Fuming!—no, sir—he ought to be!—but quite the contrary; he's cool and reconciled. "Child," says he, "Sir Patrick has defeated me, and in so masterly a manner, I could not have believed it; but I must do him justice; and I not only forgive him, but look upon him as altogether worthy to be my son-in-law."

Sir P. Beautiful! Oh, virtue is its own reward!

Isabella. "That is," says my father, "provided he takes care that Saxony has no advantage."

Sir P. Oh! there are witnesses that I have taken care of that already! and let me now secure the prize.

[*Goes to take her hand.*]

Isabella. [*Withdrawing.*] I beg your pardon, this may be very well for my father—but where is your engagement to me, sir? You have been the main spring of a great intrigue, it seems; and proved yourself a negotiator of the most determined talents.

Sir P. For the first time, as I hope for mercy.

Lady E. Forgive him this once, and I'll engage he'll never offend again.

Sir P. That you may safely answer for.

Isabella. Would you believe it, madam, my father offered him my hand on condition of his disclosing the real secret of his business here, and he refused it!

Lady E. Is it possible? Such heroic devotion!

Rodolph. Generous, indeed!

Sir P. Oh! you make me blush. 'Twas a matter of

duty—I may say, of necessity—but situated as I am—I may say, circumstanced—the struggle was tremendous!

Lady E. And for my sake, you must forgive him?

Rodolph. For both our sakes!

Isabella. Well, if I must—but you'll look after Saxony?

Sir P. He's packing up his linen at this moment, and will be packing off in his post curricule. Come along, my little Donna. [*Music.*

Enter GRAND DUKE.

Duke. One moment, Sir Patrick; I am sorry to interrupt either business or pleasure, but for the present, the ladies must excuse you—you and I must have a word or two. [*To Rodolph.*] I must beg your highness to wait for me in my cabinet.

Lady E. [*Aside to Sir Patrick.*] This is the crisis; now for one bold effort! [*Exit with Isabella.*

Rodolph. [*Also aside.*] I leave you with my last hope. [*Exit.*

Sir P. Mighty convenient and genteel!

[*The Grand Duke walks about in great disquiet.*

Duke. Within, there!

[*An Officer enters, to whom he speaks aside.*

Sir P. That's the captain of the guard; matters begin to grow serious; and here I am, with everybody's sins on my shoulders, and no friend but my natural born genius! Is it a conspiracy? If they had dropped me but a hint—sure and they did—that is the business—

[*Recollecting.—The Duke dismisses the Guard and seats himself.*

Duke. Approach, Sir Patrick. [*He obeys.*] It is high time that I knew something of your intentions. You came, it seems, without any ostensible mission; yet, since your arrival this morning, you are the universal topic, and I hear of nothing but you, and you have thrown the whole court into confusion.

Sir P. Then, upon my honor, your highness, the whole court has returned the compliment.

Duke. Yes, sir, the Saxon Envoy, the Spanish Envoy, both are loud in their complaints against you—I myself am startled and astonished at the influence you have obtained with my nephew.

Sir P. Not more than I am, take my word for it.

Duke. Your success in that quarter has exceeded your hopes: but I expect from you, without further delay, a specific explanation.

Sir P. What do you say?

Duke. A specific explanation.

Sir P. Oh! why, then, in two words, we confess.

Duke. You confess!

Sir P. We confess all, and throw ourselves upon your august clemency.

Duke. But what do you confess!

Sir P. That's a puzzler!

Duke. That is precisely what I wish to know.

Sir P. And that is most unlucky; for, with the best intentions imaginable, 'tis precisely what I find it impossible to inform your highness.

Duke. Beware, sir! you appear to be on the very verge of contumely.

Sir P. Oh! by my honor, to be wanting in respect to a potentate that gives such dinners and wines as your highness, is not the character of an Irish privy counsellor.

Duke. Must I come to the point, then?

Sir P. If you please, and you'll oblige me.

Duke. As England has been so busy in frustrating the views of Spain and Saxony, I insist on being explicitly informed whether she has any distant views of her own.

Sir P. Then, explicitly, none, and please your highness, that I am intrusted with.

Duke. You surprise me more and more!

Sir P. [*Aside.*] I am getting deeper in the mire.

Duke. And are you, sir—[*Rises.*—]—to come into my estates with your specious machinations—bring disorder into my family—and embroil me with two powerful kingdoms I desire to remain in friendship with—having only some indirect and subordinate object of your own!

Sir P. [*Aside.*] Oh! furies!

Duke. But things must not remain in this state. The only means of reconciling Spain and Saxony to our abrupt rejection of their overtures, is an immediate selection—and he must abide by it. So it be a lady of rank and birth, under the circumstances, I shall be satisfied. This I commit to that skill and influence you have already

evinced; the mischief you have done you must repair, and, as you have not chosen to be recognized in an official character, you will not be surprised if your person be made the security for its accomplishment. *[Exit.*

Sir P. Your humble servant! So, by the way of a wind-up to all my extraordinary diplomatic feats, here I am a prisoner of state, and the only way of keeping my neck out of a noose, is by getting the Prince into one. It grows mighty serious, for his highness appears to be a very sensible young man, and may not be at all disposed to accommodate us.

Enter LADY EMILY.

Lady E. Well, Sir Patrick, what is your news?

Sir P. Beautiful, my lady, beautiful—that is, if his highness is a man of taste, and of a domestic turn—if not, I don't know what may be your ladyship's position, but my affair is settled.

Lady E. To the point, my dear Sir Patrick: what is the Grand Duke's impression of our conduct?

Sir P. Why, in the first place, mine has been exceedingly irregular.

Lady E. Oh, that, of course!

Sir P. Yes, that seems a settled point! And in the next place, to satisfy both Spain and Saxony, to prevent a scene of bloodshed and desolation, and preserve the tranquillity of Europe, the Prince is immediately to make a choice.

Lady E. To make a choice?

Sir P. To prevent blunders, I'll quote his own words—instantly to make a choice and abide by it.

Lady E. My dear Sir Patrick!

Sir P. So it be a lady of birth and rank, under the circumstances, says he, I shall be satisfied.

Lady E. Oh, heavens! is it possible you have brought him to that?

Sir P. Without the slightest difficulty. You have played the devil, said he, speaking to me, and must repair the injury you have done; to your amazing abilities I commit the whole affair—intimating I'd be in a pretty scrape if I made a botch of it.

Lady E. A scrape! oh, you dear, clever, accomplished

creature: well might the Princess eulogise your extraordinary talents!

Sir P. The Princess, too! My name is up—which would do mightily well, if my neck was not in jeopardy.

Lady E. Don't be uneasy, Sir Patrick; you have done quite enough, the rest I take upon myself.

Sir P. You will?

Lady E. I'll fly to the Grand Duke—behold me, sir, I will exclaim, ready to sacrifice myself to the safety of your country!

Sir P. Oh, magnanimous!

Lady E. To appease Spain and Saxony—to save the Prince all unnecessary trouble—to rescue my friend Sir Patrick, from an untimely end—

Sir P. Me, I could not suffer it.

Lady E. Behold me ready to immolate myself. [*Stops suddenly.*] My heart fails me.

Sir P. Oh, the devil! Courage, my dear lady.

Lady E. But, no! I won't shrink.

Sir P. I wouldn't.

Lady E. After what he has said, he can't repulse me.

Sir P. He can't.

Lady E. I'll disclose the truth.

Sir P. Yourself?

Lady E. Myself—I will appeal to his justice and his honor.

Sir P. Yes.

Lady E. A few moments will decide our fate—either we are all lost, or at the pinnacle of success and fortune! [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Oh! she'll be recorded in history as a heroine of the first calibre. It's going to be decided, and as I have so ably manœuvred the whole transaction, I should like to get an inkling what it's all about. I must be a party in the business, that's certain; may be I'd credentials from the Foreign Office after dinner, and I'd forgot them—but whether I have or have not, whether I have a stamped reputation as a man of genius, or lost it forever, depends upon this awful moment. What are they about now? I hear a bustle; I tremble for the lady's sake.

Enter BARON LOWENCRAFT.

Baron. Oh, my dear sir! [*Takes Sir Patrick's hand.*]

Sir P. Oh, my dear friend!

Baron. Wish me joy.

Sir P. I do.

Baron. You have succeeded for me—done all I desired of you.

Sir P. I have?

Baron. You have! [*In a whisper.*] My rival is foiled, and I am satisfied, I shall acquaint my sovereign with the part you have taken in this affair, and if ever you have occasion for his services, you may command them.

Sir P. Don't trouble yourself; I am not one of your paltry—

Baron. Hush!

Enter COUNT MORENOS and ISABELLA.

Count. My dear friend, I congratulate you! here, my daughter is yours!

Sir P. Do you say so?

Count. You deserve her—you have admirably conducted this business, and you have accomplished my utmost wishes.

Sir P. You have succeeded?

Count. No, no—you have taken care of that! [*In a low voice.*] But at least you have defeated Saxony, and saved my honor in the tenderest point.

Isabella. Didn't I insist upon it? He couldn't help it.

Sir P. Sure, I couldn't.

Count. And now I confess, sir, that genius defies all instruction; you have this day shown a firmness, a finesse, in the midst of older disciplinarians, that has completely routed them. Your countrywomen, it seems, bear the palm from us all.

Sir P. Lady Emily?

Count. Lady Emily and you, may now judge for yourselves, the value of a profound, accomplished, diplomatic talent.

Sir P. I have prodigious proofs of it, certainly. [*Aside.*] My reputation is divided.

Enter RODOLPH, the GRAND DUKE, and LADY EMILY.

Rodolph. Victory! victory! My dear Sir Patrick, all

is discovered, all sanctioned, and you can no longer disguise your services.

Sir P. I don't; I'm too proud of them.

Duke. [*Half aside to Sir Patrick.*] Sir Patrick, this has been cleverly managed; but though they pretend that they are married, I'll wager one hundred dollars they are not.

Rodolph. [*Aside to Sir Patrick.*] Done!

Sir P. Done! we'll produce the certificate.

Duke. [*Aside.*] Hush!—At all events, 'tis admirably managed. [*To the Ambassadors.*] I hope, gentlemen, we shall now part friends; and you, Sir Patrick, I trust, will no longer disguise yourself in a career so worthy of you; and, as the affair is settled, to-morrow it shall be published in full in our official journal.

Sir P. Then I shall not know what I have been doing till to-morrow—that will be as well; all I have done will then be unfolded for the information of the public—*[Aside.]*—and myself at the same time—and I hope that my patrons at home, as well as my rivals abroad, will ratify the success of their IRISH AMBASSADOR.

THE END



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